

3-15-1994

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### Recommended Citation

"Benefits of Scientific Glass-Blowing Course are Crystal Clear to University of Dayton Students" (1994). *News Releases*. 7991.  
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# *The University of Dayton*

# *News Release*

March 15, 1994

Contact: Candace Stuart

## **BENEFITS OF SCIENTIFIC GLASS-BLOWING COURSE ARE CRYSTAL CLEAR TO UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON STUDENTS**

DAYTON, Ohio -- Chemist Colin McHugh reasoned it would add enough sparkle to his resume to catch the eye of prospective employers. John Fox figured it would help earn him a research post in an engineering graduate school. Secretary Vicki Hellmund saw it as a way to make herself more valuable in her office, and technical illustrator John Dryden used it to change careers.

An MBA, perhaps? How about a laboratory course where students learn the rare craft of scientific glass blowing from a master?

Richard Grant, a professional glass blower at the University of Dayton, designed the scientific glass-blowing course in 1978. It remains one of the most popular classes UD's chemistry department offers, in part because students know it gives them marketable skills that few others have.

"There will always be a need for scientific glass blowers," Grant said, adding that he believed about a half dozen universities nationwide offer similar courses. The lab does not qualify students to become professional glass blowers, but it does teach them basic skills and techniques.

McHugh, a 1993 UD graduate who is a chemist at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, said he is auditing the class this spring to broaden his professional and educational opportunities. "I'm trying to be very diverse," he said. "This will help me build up my resume."

The class generally attracts science and engineering majors and professionals who feel the practical knowledge they gain will help them in industry or graduate school. They learn how to make and repair standard seals and glass lab equipment, valuable skills that employers

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know will reduce lab costs while ensuring the delicate and hard-to-replace apparatus stays in good shape.

Fox, who took the course in 1992, said the class gave him an edge when he applied for a research assistant spot in Arizona State University's graduate engineering program. "There's always glassware around (in a lab)," he said. "You're often delayed when the glassware breaks, but I could construct or repair it on the spot."

Fox now works in Troy, Mich., at Findlay Industries, an engineering firm specializing in the auto industry.

A secretary in UD's chemistry department, Hellmund decided to take the class in 1992 because she reasoned the exposure would improve her knowledge of the equipment and terms used by chemists. She said she found the class so enriching and challenging that she hopes to take it again.

But of all of Grant's students, Dryden ranks as one of the most affected by the class. Formerly a technical illustrator and lab technician at Wright State University, he decided to follow in Grant's footsteps after taking the course in 1987. Dryden arranged to receive additional instruction from Grant, allowing him to become a professional glass blower and glass shop manager at WSU.

"I made a career decision, based on that class," Dryden said. "Standing in front of the flame was like going home. Dick (Grant) said, 'You have a feel for this. You could be a glass blower.'"

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For interviews, call **Richard Grant** at (513) 229-2036; **Colin McHugh** at (513) 254-5457; **John Fox** at (313) 939-0074 or (313) 643-1900 ext. 169; **Vicki Hellmund** at (513) 229-2631; and **John Dryden** at (513) 873-3124 or (513) 878-4001. For more information or photos, call **Candace Stuart** at (513) 229-3257.